

"Treasures
of Pioneer
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PIONEER WOMEN LAWYERS

Judge Florence Colleenwood Allen was born in Salt Lake City March 23, 1884, the daughter of Clarence Emir and Corinne (Tuckerman) Allen. She came from a family of Ohio pioneers who moved to Utah and later back to Ohio where her father became a professor of Greek and Latin at Western Reserve University. Judge Allen attended school in Salt Lake City until 1899. She was ready for college at the age of fourteen. After moving to Ohio she attended Western Reserve University and was graduated with a B.A. degree in 1904; an M.A. degree in 1908. She became proficient in music and also interested in law.

Western Reserve University did not admit her in the law department because of her sex. She attended New York University and received her degree in law in 1913. Judge Allen is a national honorary member of the Delta Kappa Gamma, a society for women educators. The spring number of the Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin of 1953 published a short sketch of her, the title, *Happy and Wise*. It states:

"She was the first woman to be the assistant county prosecutor of Ohio. She was the first woman to sit in a court of general jurisdiction. She was the first woman to preside as judge in a court of last resort. She was the first woman appointed to a Federal Circuit Court of Appeals. . . .

"The story of her legal career is a story of the persistence of a scholarly, splendid woman who knew what she wanted and who knew that if sufficient persistence were hers, she would arrive. She is a liberal, unprejudiced, unbiased, with a profound belief in social justice. She says simply, 'That's why I'm in law. I am interested in its social significance. It is one of man's important tools to permit better living together.' Her volume on *This Constitution of Ours* is a splendid, illuminating, scholarly treatment, always interesting, and at times eloquent. Her colleagues note that she is extraordinarily well informed on every case, because before she comes to court she has read every brief which must be considered. She more than holds her own in a field where only a generation ago women were not wanted. Judge Allen is a powerful speaker, extraordinarily eloquent."

She has published *Treaty as an Instrument of Legislation*. In 1937 she wrote the opinion for the Circuit Court of Appeals upholding the constitutionality of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and presided over the meeting held in Chattanooga. She is one of the six judges in the Sixth District of the Circuit Court of Appeals. This court hears civil and criminal cases that come up from the federal, district and tax courts.